



INFORMATION ON SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPMs) are licensed under Section 2472 of the State Medical Practice Act. They diagnose and treat medical conditions of the foot, ankle and related structures (including the tendons that insert into the foot and the nonsurgical treatment of the muscles and tendons of the leg). Any procedure and modality is within the DPM scope if utilized to diagnose and treat foot, ankle or other podiatric conditions.

In addition to performing foot and ankle surgeries, DPMs are also licensed to assist medical and osteopathic doctors (MDs, DOs) in any surgery--podiatric or non-podiatric.

DPMs are trained and fully licensed under California law to independently perform full-body history and physical (H&P) examinations in any setting for any patient. With new [regulations](#) finalized by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), there is no longer any conflict with federal criteria.

DPMs, many of whom develop expertise in the care and preservation of the diabetic foot, perform partial amputations of the foot as far as proximal with the Chopart's joint, to prevent greater loss of limb, ambulation, or life. They order and administer anesthesia and sedatives, as indicated. The *administration* of general anesthesia, of course, may only be performed by an anesthesiologist or certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA). DPMs commonly administer intravenous (IV) sedation.

Note that some DPMs licensed prior to 1984 have not met the Board of Podiatric Medicine's (BPM's) licensure requirements for ankle surgery, amputation, and surgical assistance to MDs. They may assist other DPM surgeons in any podiatric procedure and may assist MDs as non-licensed operating room technicians do in non-podiatric procedures. Facilities may verify license status online [\[http://bpm.ca.gov/\]](http://bpm.ca.gov/) by clicking on the Quick Hit for license verification. Most DPMs are in fact "ankle licensed." This will be indicated by "License or Registration Class: **ANK**", and authorizes the full DPM medical scope.

Section 2472 also specifies the various peer-reviewed facilities in which ankle surgery may be performed. It may be viewed in its entirety from BPM's website under Laws & Regulations. BPM interprets surgical treatment of the ankle to include those parts of the tibia, fibula, their malleoli and related structures as indicated by the procedures.

For questions or further information, please contact the Board's executive officer at 916-263-2650 (direct) or his e-mail address Jim_Rathlesberger@dca.ca.gov.

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